

*haute lice* ‘two-beamed vertical loom’; *montants*, ‘loom uprights’; *ensouples*, ‘loom beams’; *ensouple dérouleuse*, ‘warp beam’; *ensouple enrouleuse*, ‘cloth beam’; *fil de chaîne* ‘warp thread’; *fil de trame* ‘weft thread’ or ‘yarn’; *lice* or *lisse*, ‘heddle’; *bâton de lice*, ‘heddle rod’; *roseau de tissage*, ‘shed stick’; *tendeurs latéraux* or *pincés de tension*, ‘cloth stretchers’; *peigne à tisser*, ‘comb beater’.

It is interesting that the art of weaving has influenced nomenclature even where, as indicated (p. 8), the upright loom has never been known, or, if known, has vanished over the centuries. An example of this is on the fringes of the southern Sahara where it has been a feature of the cultural influences from within Mali or Niger, not those that have come from the Berber north. Within the social structure of the Mauritanian Bīdān, for example, more especially the part Znāga Zwāya, imagery from ‘the loom’ has influenced the social system to the extent that ‘white tributaries’ (*lahma*, Classical Arabic *luhma*), were once portrayed as the weft of a woven fabric, whilst the warp were the, originally Berber, Znāga, and the overwhelming Hassānī lordly ‘Arab’ *mujāhidūn*. Other weaving terms still exist in Hassāniyya; such as *sde* ‘chaîne de métier’, and *sdê*, ‘montage de la chaîne sur le métier à tisser’ (Catherine Taine-Cheikh, *Dictionnaire Hassniyya–Français*, Vol. 5, zā–sīn, p. 974). A picture of ‘primitive’ Saharan weaving techniques may be seen in Caro Baroja’s *Estudios Saharianos*, p. 233, Fig. 132.—El telar sahariano donde se tejen los *fiḷya*.

In his conclusion Bynon, after carefully analysing the varied Berber vocabulary and terminology gleaned, offers a number of interesting historical and cultural deductions. He has suggested that, corresponding to the loom used for weaving, one Berber form was to be found, geographically, between Morocco and Sokna in Libya. The purely Berber term that is used is not the specific name of an instrument but an ancient noun of action, the specific sense of which very loosely conveys the meaning of the object and tool of the action itself. He contrasts this with the Arabic term where nouns which describe the instrument itself are the norm. This leads him to weigh up the possibility of some parallels with the Latin, *tēla*, a possibility which is not unreasonable in view of the major cultural impact of the Romans on North Africa. But he remains unhappy about the evidence so far collected, though he is certain of the considerable antiquity of the Berber terms which are indigenous to the Maghrib itself.

This debate is clearly still ongoing and is open to varied hypothetical theories. In any event, this book is a benchmark amongst the studies of the loom and of weaving in North Africa and it should be on the reading list of all who are specifically interested in weaving amongst its sedentary Berber peoples.

H. T. NORRIS

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## GENERAL

JOHN R. HINNELLS:

*The Zoroastrian Diaspora: Religion and Migration.*

xviii, 865 pp. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. £130.

In our globalized world, religion has ceased to be a local phenomenon. Nowadays there is no major religion which has not spread around the globe. But what characterizes many diasporas is, in Ninian Smart’s definition, ‘an element

of exile'. This applies particularly to a community as microscopic as that of the Zoroastrians, whose numbers are in the region of 120,000 world-wide. The oldest diaspora community is that in India, and this dates back to the early Islamic period. There they became known as Parsis, because they came from 'Pars' (Persia). As to the modern Zoroastrian diaspora, Hinnells aptly distinguishes two main phases of migration, the first in the mid-nineteenth and the second in the second half of the twentieth century (p. 699). From about 1850 onwards, diaspora communities developed in China, Sindh (then part of British India, present-day Pakistan), East Africa and Britain. The Zoroastrians of this diaspora came from India and their migrations were linked to trade within the British Empire. By contrast, the migrants of the second phase came not only from India, but also from Iran. In addition, there were 'twice-migrants' from Pakistan and East Africa. Their destinations were, again, Britain, but also Canada, the USA, Australia and Germany. Their diasporic movements were only rarely for trade, but more typically for education, career development and for leaving hostile regimes. In particular, it was increasing islamization in Pakistan after independence and Iran after the 1979 revolution, together with Black African policies in East Africa, which made Zoroastrians leave those countries. As a result of such migrations Zoroastrians are now found in more countries than at any stage in their long history. To the present day, the Parsis of India constitute the largest and most important of diaspora groups, but their numbers are decreasing while the size, influence and significance of those in the New World are growing.

With this substantial book (both in volume and price), John R. Hinnells has delivered an awesome piece of research, the fruit of thirty years of study. He not only undertook an unprecedented survey of Zoroastrian diaspora communities by means of a questionnaire, which yielded 1,840 responses, on demographic issues, religious belief and practice and secular culture, but he also visited the eleven diaspora centres he writes about, studying their archival sources and living with local Zoroastrian families. His unrivalled first-hand familiarity with communities world-wide enables him both to present fiercely debated topics in a sensitive and impartial manner, and to convey personal perceptions of individual Zoroastrians. The present work is based on his Ratanbai Katrak Lectures delivered in Oxford in 1985. Following *Zoroastrians in Britain*, published in 1996, it is, in one sense, volume 2 of those lectures. Volume 3 is planned to be *The History and Religion of the Parsis in Bombay Presidency (1662–1947)*, which Hinnells and the Zoroastrian high priest Dastur Dr K. M. JamaspAsa are jointly preparing for publication.

In eleven chapters, Hinnells discusses Zoroastrian diasporas in post-independence Bombay (pp. 33–137), Hong Kong and the China Seas (pp. 145–88), Karachi (pp. 189–244), East Africa (pp. 245–313), Europe, especially Britain (pp. 314–424), the United States and Canada (pp. 425–542) and, finally, Australia (pp. 543–602). The structure of each chapter follows a similar pattern: a historical survey providing the background against which Zoroastrian migration into the region is presented, followed by a discussion of the community and the role of religion within it. An introduction outlining key issues of the book (pp. 1–32) provides the theoretical underpinning of the study, a chapter on 'The global Zoroastrian diaspora' (pp. 138–44) gives a broad picture of Zoroastrians world-wide drawn from Hinnells' survey questionnaire, 'Globalizing trends' are discussed in chapter 10 (pp. 603–98) and the results of the study are summarized in the 'Conclusion' (pp. 699–736). There are, moreover, three appendices. Appendix 1 gives the text of a speech delivered by the President of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, Sir Shapoorji

Bomanji Billimoria, on the occasion of Indian Independence at a function held on 15 August 1947 (pp. 737–40). The data resulting from the survey are given in Appendix 2 (pp. 741–99) and the full text of the questionnaire in Appendix 3 (pp. 800–17). The book is concluded by a selected bibliography on Zoroastrianism (pp. 819–22), a glossary (pp. 823–27) and excellent indexes (pp. 829–65) compiled by Nora Firby.

Contrary to the claims of some scholars, especially W. Safran and R. Cohen, Hinnells argues convincingly that Parsis have a strong concept of, and powerful emotional attachment to, Iran, the homeland of their religion, and therefore do constitute a diaspora. Although it is not uncommon for Parsis to consider themselves to be Indians first and Parsis second, they are profoundly aware of their Persian ancestry. Moreover, many second- and third-generation Parsis in America regard Persia, rather than India, as their homeland, a sense of belonging illustrated by the film *In the Footsteps of Our Forefathers*, which records the pilgrimage of American Zoroastrian professionals back to the homeland of their religion. This tie with Iran is kept alive by the practice of praying in the ancient Iranian language of the Avesta, by motifs of Achaemenid art which decorate the walls of many homes and prayer rooms and by stories from the Persian epic of the *Shahname*, which forms part of Zoroastrian culture. To these arguments may be added that places depicted in Zoroastrian religious imagery are located in Iranian lands. For instance, the Zoroastrians live in expectation of a world saviour who will complete the battle against evil victoriously at the end of time: he is expected to emerge from Lake Hāmūn in Sistān. There the Kūh-i Khwāja, the ‘Mountain of the Lord’, attracts Zoroastrian (and also Muslim) pilgrims to the present day.

Hinnells identifies several features that characterize all Zoroastrian diaspora communities. One of them is that diaspora Zoroastrians have made considerable contributions to the society and economy of both their sending (India and Iran) and new countries. In particular, much of the wealth of diaspora Zoroastrians flows back to charitable foundations in India, especially Bombay. For instance, Hong Kong Parsis funded not only two housing colonies in Navsari, but also made huge donations to the Parsi General Hospital in Bombay and funded the new fire temple in Godrej Baug on Malabar Hill, the Shapurji Fakirji Jokhi Agiary, which was inaugurated in 1999. Back in Hong Kong, Parsis had an important role both in the growth of banking and the stock exchange and in the founding of Hong Kong University (H. N. Mody). Another example is Sindh, where members of the small community made immense contributions to the economic development of Karachi and served society in leading positions. In Britain, the first three Asian Members of Parliament were Parsis.

Another characteristic of diaspora Zoroastrians is a strong sense of loyalty to whichever country they inhabit. When they feel unable to give such loyalty they move on and emigrate. Loyalty even has priority over communal ties. For example, in the dispute about the ceding of the East Coast Strip to Zanzibar, Dara Patel of Mombasa, who was against the transfer, negotiated with two Zanzibari Parsis on the opposite side, namely Rustom Sidhwa for the Afro-Shirazi Party and Ratti Bulsara for the Nationalists (p. 293). Furthermore, Parsis in virtually all diaspora groups are proud of the part women play in their societies, and in this, as in other respects, they see themselves as being distinct from other Asian groups. The ‘coming out’ of Parsi woman took place much earlier than it did in other Indian communities. For instance, the first Indian girl to go to school was a Parsi (Dosebai Cowasji Jessawalla), as was the first Indian woman (Cornelia Sorabji) to study at Oxford, where she read law from 1889–92 (p. 327). Among Zoroastrians it is typically the mothers who teach the religion to their children.

A common feature of diaspora communities is that they tend to preserve a traditional religious orientation more strongly than in the sending country. While the level of secularization is relatively high amongst Bombay Parsis (pp. 114 f.), East African Zoroastrians, for instance, remained religiously orthodox and, when migrating to Britain in the 1960s, became an important factor in the reassertion of traditional boundaries in the London community (pp. 385, 422). Key causes of communal, highly divisive, disputes are intermarriage and conversion. In earlier Indian society Parsis were a 'caste'-like group and traditionally married within the fold. 'In-marriage' is still common in rural areas and among Parsis living in housing colonies, but is becoming increasingly difficult in small and dwindling diaspora communities. Intermarriage occurs most frequently among the highly-educated cosmopolitans.

While most studies of South Asian communities in Britain are of a sociological or political nature, Hinnells identifies religion as a crucial marker of identity in diaspora groups (pp. 321 f.). With *The Zoroastrian Diaspora* he has made an important, indeed ground-breaking, contribution not only to the study of Zoroastrianism but also to the debate on migration and diaspora communities. This is a book which nobody working in Zoroastrian or Diaspora studies can afford to ignore.

ALMUT HINTZE

MU-CHOU POO:

*Enemies of Civilization: Attitudes toward Foreigners in Ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, and China.*

(SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture.) xviii, 211 pp.  
Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005. \$29.95.

Defining and 'knowing' the Other have long constituted a yardstick for self-positioning and self-empowerment. Among the various 'others', the Foreigner is one that may attract attention and cause acceptance, refusal or indifference. But who or what is Foreign? The as yet unknown? The different, the outsider? And if so, different or outside in what respect: 'nature' or culture, so to speak? This cultural/political notion being closely dependent on the eye of the beholder, it challenges attempts to define and substantiate it, all the more when we refer to a distant past, when the risk increases of pigeon-holing antiquity according to modern constructs.

In spite and in (optimistic) defiance of these issues, which he is apparently well aware of, Mu-chou Poo has produced a comparative study of the attitudes towards foreigners in Mesopotamia, Egypt and China as seen in textual, graphic and archaeological evidence. Proposing to better understand some of the characteristics of these ancient civilizations, particularly in terms of cultural consciousness and self-perception, by observing and comparing the way(s) in which they related to (or ignored) foreign people or things, this study investigates the oft-dichotomic theory and practice of dealing with the Other.

After illustrating the relativity of both cultural identity and the notion of Foreign itself, Poo shows how outsiders, whatever their nature, often were—or were constructed to be—conducive to identity-building. A few interesting points are raised concerning the necessity for the existence of foreigners, though more could have been said on the politics and requirements—often unrelated to effective differentiation—of branding somebody as foreign. Representations, descriptions of and attitudes towards foreigners are then